

PRESS RELEASE

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Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced today that John K. Stephens, 52, Madison, Wis., was sentenced today by U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb to 42 months in prison, without parole, for possessing child pornography. Stephens pleaded guilty to this charge on September 29, 2008.

Stephens' activity was discovered when an undercover law enforcement agent downloaded child pornography from a computer located at Stephens' residence. Based on that information, law enforcement officials executed a federal search warrant at the residence in Madison in November 2007.

Stephens was using a file sharing program to download and distribute child pornography. He admitted that he had been searching for and downloading child pornography and adult pornography daily for approximately two years.

The charges against Stephens were the result of an investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Laura Przybylinski Finn.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafchildhood.gov.

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